

BALACLAVA ROAD VICTORIAN GROUP

Address	Balaclava Road: 330 to 338A and 344 (north side), and 347 to 351 (south side)
Significance	Local
Construction Dates	1888-89
Period	Late Victorian period
Date Inspected	Mid-2019, Late 2022



338 and 338A Balaclava Road

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

The *Balaclava Road Victorian Group* is a loose cluster of late 19th-century villas, row houses and shop/dwellings that were constructed by Wybars, a family of Scottish immigrants who had arrived in Melbourne by at least 1885. Within two years, husband-and-wife George and Agnes Wybar and some of their adult children acquired land near the intersection of Balaclava and Kambrook roads, including the majority that now forms the group. The Wybars were responsible for all of the building activity (1888 and 1889) in the group.

The following original elements contribute to the significance of the *Balaclava Road Victorian Group*:

- Generally intact single-storey dwellings dating from the late Victorian period,
- L-shaped plans at 330, 338, and 338A Balaclava Road,
- Existing subdivision pattern,
- Established setbacks,

- Intact hipped roof forms,
- Brick or rendered chimneys with elaborate caps and moulding,
- Bracketed eaves, both to the front and side elevations,
- Parapets, including all ornamentation, such as pediments, balustrades, panelled pilasters, console brackets, moulded motifs (shells, floral, ferns, acanthus), urns, statuettes, tiled or vermiculated panels, etc.,
- Intact walls of bichrome or polychrome brickwork, including tuck-pointing and brick patterning,
- Basalt plinths,
- Intact timber-framed walls of ashlar boarding or painted weatherboards,
- Verandahs, including single-pitch or convex roof forms, decks of tessellated tiles, and all cast-iron elements (fluted columns, friezes, fringes, brackets),
- Timber-framed, double-hung sashes and masonry sills, including brackets, and
- Panelled timber doors, including transom windows and sidelights.

Contributory places:

- Balaclava Road: 330, 332, 334, 338, 338A, 344, 347, 349, 351

Non-contributory places:

- None

How is it Significant?

The *Balaclava Road Victorian Group* is of historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Glen Eira.

Why is it Significant?

The *Balaclava Road Victorian Group* is of historical significance for its capacity to illustrate speculative development in Caulfield North in the late 1880s. During this phase of rapid growth – part of Melbourne's broader 'land boom' – large sections of the district assumed a suburban formation, particularly in the vicinity of rail corridors. The masonry buildings and single timber building were constructed at the behest of the Wybar family between 1888 and 1889. This flurry of Wybar-directed activity was largely responsible for establishing a small enclave in the vicinity of the intersection of Balaclava and Kambrook roads that remained largely self-contained into the mid-20th century. As a small-scale contractor, George Wybar was both builder and superintendent, utilising his skillset and labour, and that of his sons and hired tradesmen, to erect shops and dwellings that he either tenanted or sold on completion. Such activity underwrote much of Caulfield's evolution from a semi-rural locality to an increasingly urban landscape in the late Victorian period. Although Wybar was likely typical of builder-developers in the region, it is rare in the context of the municipality to gain this level of insight into their personal background, operations, and output at such a definable level. (Criterion A)

The *Balaclava Road Victorian Group* is of aesthetic significance as a collection of good and, for the most part, substantively intact late 19th-century dwellings. These buildings express the then-popular Italianate style, although they display an especially rich range of detail for buildings of such a modest scale. Distinguishing many within the group are elaborate pediments adorned with recurring motifs, such as shells, floral arrangements, unicorns, lions, and vermiculated or tiled panels. These compositions signal their construction by the Wybars. The use of patterned tiles in panels is particularly distinctive within this context and evocative of late Victorian period taste, as well as the propensity of the Wybars for ostentatious presentation. More broadly, this level of façade embellishment reflects the ebullience of the 'land boom' era and the aspirations of home and shop occupants to present a 'grand' front to the street. In the context of the municipality, the integrated shop/residences and their U-shaped format (330 and 338/338A Balaclava Road) are also noteworthy. Augmenting the *Balaclava Road Victorian Group's* aesthetic quality is its spatial and visual relationship to other similarly designed nearby buildings for which the Wybars were also responsible. (Criterion E)

Description

The *Balaclava Road Victorian Group* encompasses two clusters of buildings that address both sides of Balaclava Road, near its intersection with Kambrook Road. To the front of some group members are sections of basalt channelling. To the rear of nos 347 to 351 runs a basalt-paved laneway. Other public domain elements (street trees, footpaths, nature strips, and crossovers) date after the formative late Victorian period.

The group is formed by nine single-storey, freestanding buildings, except for the co-joined pair (row houses) at nos 332 and 334. Two of these buildings were constructed as integrated shop/dwellings (nos 330, 338 and 338A) and are doubled-fronted. The remaining dwellings are single-fronted.



330 (right) Balaclava Road.



338 Balaclava Road.

Characteristic of such development in the late 19th century, the allotments are narrow and elongated, a pattern that remains. The

buildings have small setbacks from the front boundary, although the projecting shopfronts (nos 330 and 338/338A) are set to the footpath. All have limited or no side setbacks.

The group contains three common late 19th-century typologies; small villas (nos 347, 349, 344, 351), row houses (nos 332/334) and combined shop/residences (nos 330 and 338/338A). All buildings were erected by the Wybars in the popular idiom of late Victorian period Melbourne – the Italianate style.

By the 1880s, the Italianate style was widely perceived as the epitome of contemporary design. Imported from England, it blended the classical tradition with a conscious pursuit of the 'picturesque'. A key objective was the presenting an appealing composition to the public realm. Its hallmarks included asymmetrical massing, bracketed eaves, diverse classicised motifs, bays (mostly faceted), grouped windows and – at more extravagant examples – a tower element (not present in this group). The Italianate idiom was utilised across the built spectrum in the late 19th century, its attraction to contractors bolstered by propagation in pattern books, ease of construction (often utilising 'stock items for decoration') and scope for adaption.¹

Like many professional builders in the period, the Wybars deployed a consistent package of features across their projects. An identifier of their work, both at this group and other buildings they were responsible for in the immediate area, is their preference to continue bracketed eaves (paired and timber) to the side elevations – a less standard affectation at the time. In general, the Wybars employed a rich compositional approach for their projects, which typically revolved around an ostentatious pediment. This feature was not atypical for the late Victorian period; however, such a concentrated degree of detail was less common at the level of more modest suburban dwellings and commercial premises.

Roofs in the group are hipped, most with rear M-profiles (comprising a central valley to the rear half, which enabled a low ridgeline) and are either fully or partially concealed by parapets, except at no. 349. The 1945 aerial photograph shows that other than no. 349 (metal roof sheeting), all other roofs were originally clad in slate. The slate has since been replaced by corrugated metal sheeting or tiles.

Chimneys, either single or paired, of polychrome brickwork with moulded corbels and brackets are present on most of the group's buildings. However, some are rendered (nos 332 and 334), and several are overpainted. A narrow eaves overhang is also a standard feature.

Most of the group's buildings are of brick construction in a Flemish bond, with remnant tuck-pointing to façades. Bichrome brickwork (cream, red or dark brown, the latter likely Hawthorn bricks) predominates, although no. 351 is polychromatic. Several have been overpainted to some degree.² Only one member of the group is timber-framed, with no 349 featuring ashlar boarding to its façade.

Rendered pediments (overpainted) provide elaborate silhouettes across the group. All exhibit a plethora of ornamentation, namely pediments (either arched, curved or triangular with floral or shell motifs), classicised balustrades, panelled pilasters and console brackets, which tend to be individualised by an array of moulded decorations (spiral/scroll-like ornaments and rosettes), tiled or vermiculated panels. Pre-cast cement decorations, such as urns and statuettes (strikingly, unicorns and lions), are also apparent. House name plates or inscriptions appear at several places on the cornice, often below the pediment.

Verandahs also define the façades. These are mainly single-pitch roofs independent of the primary roof and clad in corrugated metal sheeting. Indicative of late Victorian period design in Melbourne (and the prosperity of the 'land boom' era), many display florid combinations of cast-iron components (domestically produced as stock items during the 1880s), including fluted columns with classicised capitals and/or bases, and a range of filigree friezes/fringes/brackets (diverse patterns). Decks of tessellated tiles also survive in some places.

The group has two shopfronts or 'display windows' at nos 330 and 338/338A. Both are set in the street-facing walls of wings that project from the setback residence to the footpath. Their U-shaped format is distinctive in the municipality and demonstrates a degree of planning, conceivably, the desire of the Wybars to achieve a more varied streetscape. The shopfront at 338/338A is a recessed tripartite 'display window', which is likely original. Its initial access was likely in the east elevation (note infilled arched opening) from the right-of-way. The shopfront and verandah at no. 330 have recently been replaced.

¹ Timothy Hubbard, 'Italianate Style', in Phillip Goad and Julie Willis, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, 2012, pp356-57



² Completely overpainted at nos 330, 338 and 338A and partly so at no. 344 (to the sides) and no. 351 (façade).

Original windows elsewhere in the group are tall timber-framed and double-hung sashes, predominantly grouped in pairs or tripartite configurations, often with a central unit flanked by narrow sidelights. Several also have rendered and bracketed masonry sills. Most buildings display four-panelled and low-waisted timber doors with sidelights and transom windows. Some door frames also feature small projecting console brackets.



No group member retains an original front fence. High masonry replacement fences have been introduced in some cases, which tend to obscure views of the façade.

The following Schedule provides additional information about individual buildings.

Schedule – Balaclava Road

Address	Key Attributes	Image
No. 330	<p><i>Tarnaki House</i> (Maori name for a mountain on New Zealand's North Island), combined shop and residence, erected in 1889.</p> <p>L-shape plan, the design mirrors nos 338/338A.</p> <p>Shopfront retains panelled pilasters and parapet with triangular pediment (floral motif) and bottled balustrade, but the metal framing and glazing is contemporary. Side sashes (east side of projecting wing) are likely original.</p> <p>Timber-framed shopfront and glazing are contemporary.</p> <p>Skillion verandah has been rebuilt with replacement metal frieze, brackets, and posts.</p> <p>Original door and tripartite window (verandah wall) remain</p>	 <p>(Source: courtesy of Glen Eira Council)</p>
Nos 332 and 334	<p><i>Albert Villa and Stanley Villa</i> (Federation period names), co-joined pair built in 1889, partly obscured.</p> <p>Bichrome brickwork with a cream brick string course. Wing walls.</p> <p>Parapet with a pair of arched pediments (shell motif), ornate balustrade, panelled piers, some urns, and console brackets.</p> <p>Verandah retained to no. 334 but enclosed to no. 332. Detail lost.</p> <p>Cast-iron post and frieze are replacement elements. Original door and tripartite windows at no. 334.</p>	

Address	Key Attributes	Image
Nos 338/338A	<p><i>Dunedin House</i> (city on New Zealand's South Island, name derives from Scottish Gaelic), combined shop and residence, constructed in 1889.</p> <p>Basalt plinth (eastern elevation).</p> <p>L-shape plan, design mirrors no. 330. Shopfront has panelled pilasters and a parapet with triangular pediment (floral motif), bottled balustrade and urns. Recessed front windows with planter box.</p> <p>Verandah with two fluted cast-iron columns (Corinthian order capitals) and geometric frieze and brackets – likely replacement. Deck not original. Original doors and tripartite windows with timber shutters.</p>	
No. 344	<p><i>Kirkstall</i>, constructed in 1888.</p> <p>Bichrome brick with diaper pattern to façade (red brick). Comparatively tall polychrome brick chimney.</p> <p>The parapet has an arched pediment (shell motif), bottled balustrade, dentillated cornice, small vermiculated panels and console brackets (floral motif).</p> <p>Verandah with single fluted cast-iron column (Corinthian order capitals) and decorative frieze and bracket (fan motif), and fringe (fleur-de-lis). Deck of tessellated tiles.</p> <p>Original door and pair of double-hung sashes with bracketed sill.</p>	
No. 347	<p><i>Ben Bolt Villa</i> (presumably a reference to a mid-19th century poem by Thomas Dunn English), erected circa 1888. Partly obscured.</p> <p>Bichrome brickwork.</p> <p>The parapet has a curved pediment with flanking floral motifs, bottled balustrade, console brackets and, notably, panels of coloured tiles (floral patterning).</p> <p>Verandah retains cast-iron frieze, brackets (fan motif), fringe (geometric), and a fin wall with an arched recess. Deck altered. The original door and tripartite window display an ornate bracketed sill.</p>	

Address	Key Attributes	Image
No. 349	<p><i>Tillicountry</i> (town in Scotland, near Edinburgh), built in 1888.</p> <p>Partly obscured by high brick fence.</p> <p>Hipped roof integrates verandah (partly altered) – retains three turned timber posts and cast-iron frieze and brackets (geometric motif) and fringe (cross motif).</p> <p>Facade wall of timber ashlar boarding.</p> <p>Original door (transom only) and tripartite window (sidelights have coloured glazing, top pane).</p>	
No. 351	<p><i>Ruby Villa</i>, erected in 1888. Partly obscured.</p> <p>Retains polychrome brickwork to visible side elevation (overpainted to the front).</p> <p>The parapet has an arched pediment (acanthus motif) flanked by lion and unicorn statuettes, classicised balustrade, vermiculated panels, and urns.</p> <p>Verandah is largely intact with a pair of fluted cast-iron columns (Corinthian order capitals) and frieze, brackets, and fringe (fern motif). Includes a fin wall with an arched recess and a deck of tessellated tiles.</p> <p>The original door and pair of double-hung sashes with bracketed sill are also evident.</p>	

History

Context

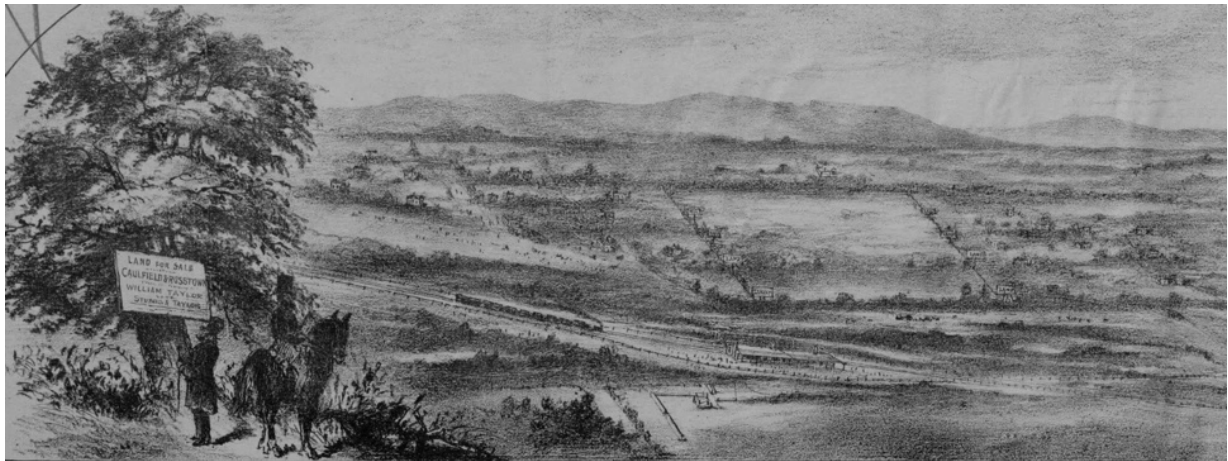
The City of Glen Eira encompasses the unceded Country of the *Boonwurrung/Bunurong* and *Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung* peoples of the Eastern Kulin Nation, who have inhabited and managed its landscape for over a thousand generations and maintain an ongoing connection.

Caulfield emerged, from the mid-19th century, as a sparsely inhabited and peripheral region of Melbourne, a landscape of swamp, heath and red gum flats – exploited by transient timber-cutters and Gippsland graziers as a holdover point for stock on the way to market – with a nascent settlement at the intersection of Glenhuntly and Hawthorn roads known as ‘Camden Town’. Despite its relative isolation, the early Crown sales attracted those of means and a patchwork of grand homes arose, set amidst generous gardens and working properties. Classed as a ‘pastoral and agricultural district’ in the mid-1860s,³ it was still seen as a ‘pretty [and] rural place’ at the beginning of the 1880s.⁴ The establishment of Caulfield railway station (1879) boosted the profile

³ Robert Whitworth, *Bailliere’s Victorian Gazetteer Road Guide*, London, 1865, p84

⁴ Robert Whitworth, *The Official Handbook & Guide to Melbourne*, F Bailliere, 1880, p196

of the racecourse and the area's reputation for market gardens, nurseries and orchards, rather than as a residential locale.⁵



Sketch of Caulfield railway station and surrounding semi-rural environs in the 1880s.

(Source: *Plan of building allotments in suburban portions 74 & 90, Parish of Prahran*, 188?, SLV, BIB ID 2038369)

From the mid-1880s, large swathes of the region began to transform with the hyper-speculation of the 'land boom', which led to a surge in subdivision and construction activity, principally in proximity to rail corridors. By the close of the decade, the population had more than tripled (from approximately 2,400 to 8,000), and the dwelling count swelled (400 to approximately 2,000).⁶ Like elsewhere on Melbourne's suburban fringe, this phenomenon was driven by an inflow of British capital, an enlarging population, widespread prosperity and a sweeping desire to occupy a freestanding and single-family house.⁷ At the height of this marked growth, one of the local newspapers even appropriated the popular contemporary epithet for the city and portrayed the swelling district as 'marvellous Caulfield'.⁸

This intensity of this phase proved transitory, curtailed by the depression conditions of the early 1890s. General growth renewed gingerly from the turn of the century, stimulated by the expansion and enhancement of the railway and tram networks, before once again escalating in pace and extent across the interwar years as the district's middle-class identity solidified. By the mid-1920s, the eastern and central parts of the municipality consisted of various well-established middle-radius suburbs and the district as a whole was second only to the City of Melbourne in population.⁹

Precinct-Specific

The land included within the Balaclava Road Victorian Group formed part of a wide expanse near the centre of the Caulfield district reserved by the Crown for recreational purposes at its survey in 1856.¹⁰ This area included natural wetland, such as 'Paddy's Swamp' (now Caulfield Park) and 'Black Swamp' (East Caulfield Reserve), as well as an area of 'flat sandy scrub', known initially as 'The Heath', of which part of was proclaimed as Caulfield Racecourse in 1859.¹¹ The group was also situated

⁵ 'Caulfield', *Victorian Places*, 2014, available online; Jill Barnard, 'Caulfield', *eMelbourne*, School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, July 2008

⁶ Henry Heylyn Hayter, *Victorian Year Book For 1880-81*, Melbourne, Government Printer, 1881, p48; and Hayter, *Victorian Year-Book 1892*, Melbourne, Government Printer, 1892, p94

⁷ Graeme Davison, *City dreamers: the urban imagination in Australia*, Sydney, NewSouth Publishing 2016, Chapter 5

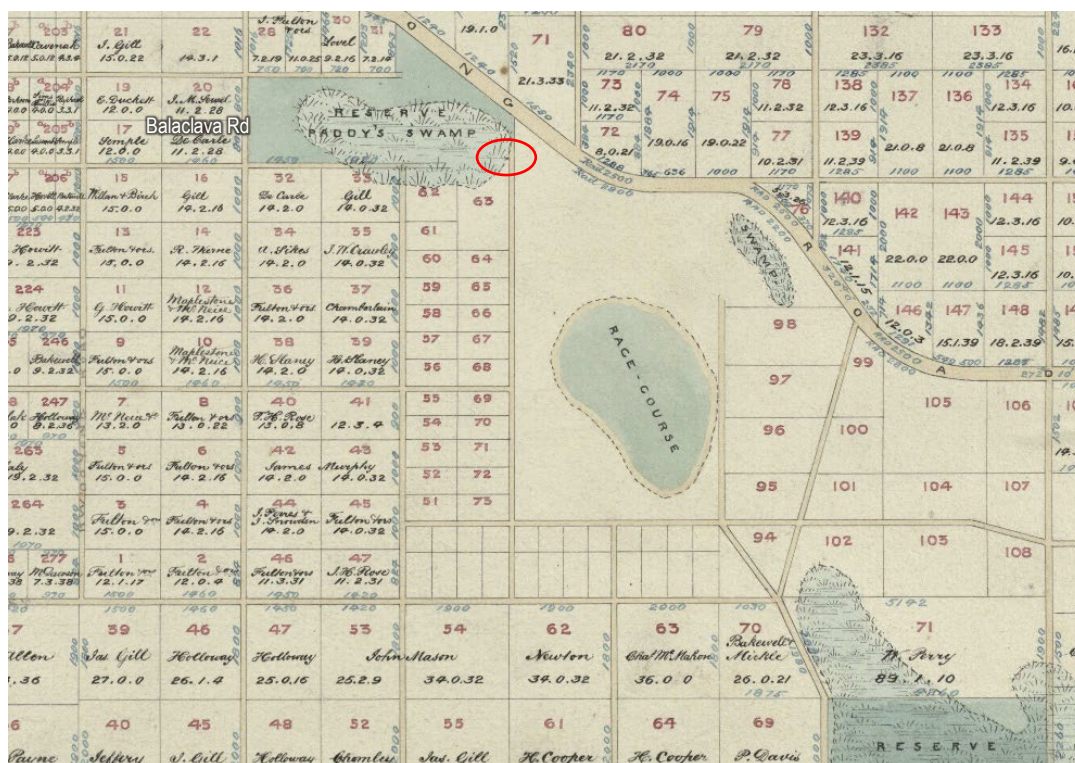
⁸ 'A Place Worth Seeing', *Prahran Telegraph*, 24 November 1888, p24

⁹ Review of population figures in the *Victorian Year Books*, Australian Bureau of Statistics

¹⁰ Caulfield was first surveyed by Henry B Foot in the early 1850s, likely on the instructions of Victoria's first Surveyor-General, Robert Hoddle (appointed 1851). Foot's subsequent surveys of the district were published between 1853-56 (refer to *Plan of portions marked in the Parish of Prahran*, 1851, SLV, BIB ID 2030273; and *Plan of the Parish of Prahran, County of Bourke*, 1853, SLV, BIB ID 2153766), with the majority of initial sales taking place between 1854-64 – Peter R Murray and John C Wells, *From sand, swamp and heath: A History of Caulfield*, J & D Burrows, 1980, p2. Foot also established the locality's road grid, including Balaclava and Kambrook roads.

¹¹ 'Trustees of the ground set apart at Caulfield as a site for racing and other purposes of public recreation', *Victorian Government Gazette*, no. 50, 5 April 1859, p660; and 'The Caulfield Races', *Argus*, 25 April 1859, p5. The name, 'The Heath', referenced the central part of the reserve and remained in popular use into the 20th century.

near an early service/commercial centre in the district, which developed at the south-eastern corner of Balaclava and Hawthorn roads, opposite Paddy's Swamp.¹²



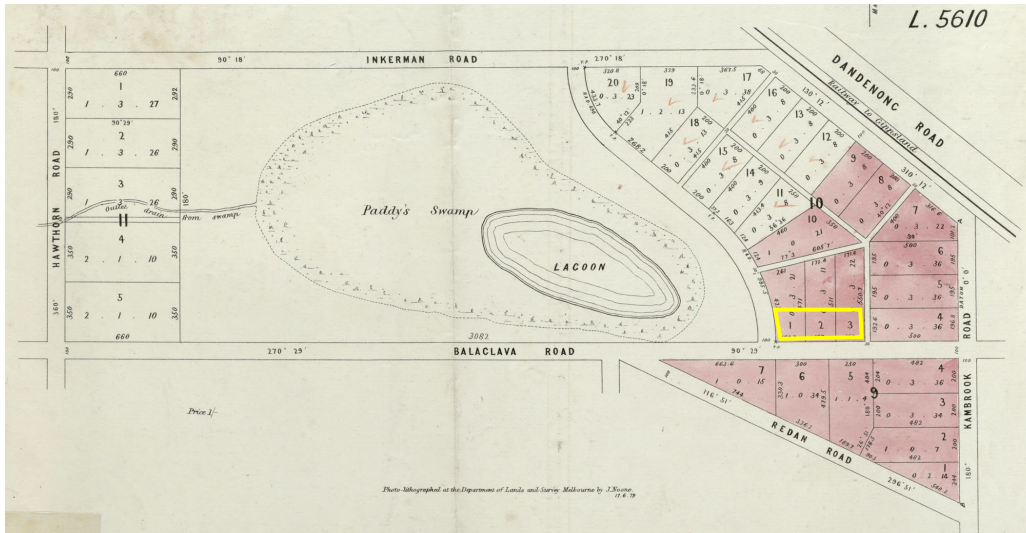
Extract from a parish map showing the extent of reserved land near the centre of the Caulfield Road District. The area between Bamba and Kambrook roads had been alienated from the reserve in 1857 (although it was not auctioned until 1864). The approximate location of the Balaclava Road Victorian Group is indicated by the red circle.
(Source: Thomas H Lightfoot, *Plan of the Parish of Prahran in the Country of Bourke*, 1865, SLV)

Control over of the reserve system remained a contentious local matter into the 1870s, a period in which Paddy's Swamp – despite the large-scale extraction of peat/sand and hydrological disturbances – remained a relatively natural environment:

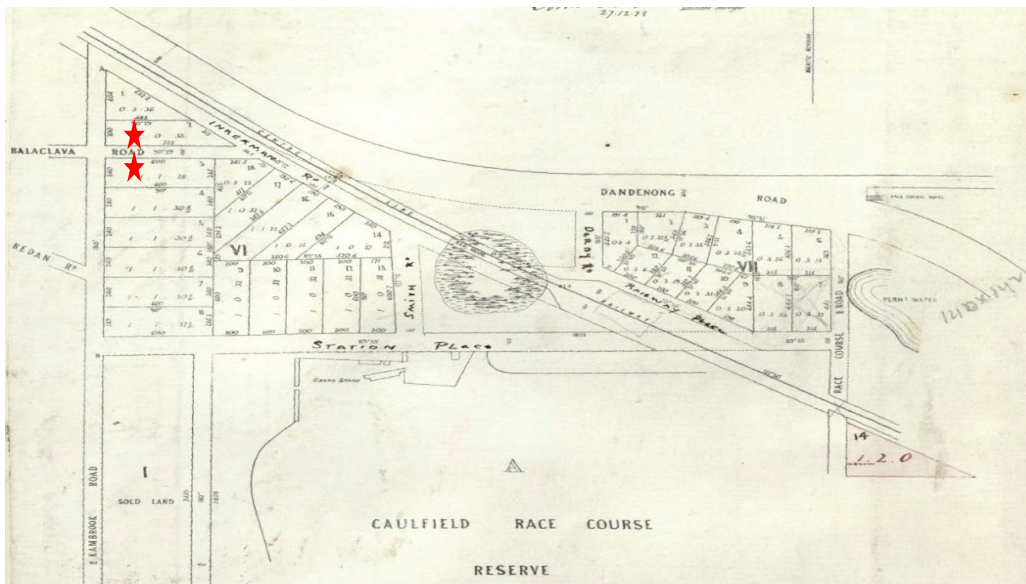
[being] only fenced on two sides, the rest ... open and about a quarter of it a big swamp with a bed of reeds in the centre and teeming with wild duck and swans.¹³

Around 1878, the north-eastern section of this remnant wetland was excised in order to supply a route for the Gippsland railway line.¹⁴ To the vexation of the then Shire of Caulfield (1871-1901), the Land Office then subdivided and sold off a sizable part of Paddy's Swamp and much of The Heath (only recently split by the construction of Caulfield Station) in 1879.¹⁵ The following maps, which depict the formation of new streets and the extension of Balaclava Road, reflect this release of 'suburban allotments', on which the buildings comprising the Balaclava Road Victorian Group would be erected during the late 1880s.

¹² Comprising the 'Black Chapel', the locality's first church (and later post office) and the Caulfield Hotel (circa 1860 – replaced by St Aloysius's Church) as well as several commercial premises and residences – Geulah Solomon, *Caulfield's Heritage: Caulfield's Building Heritage*, vol. 1 (Burwood, City of Caulfield, 1989), pp. 86-87; and Murray and Wells, *From sand, swamp and heath*, p7
¹³ William Ludwig Samuel Sebastian Lechte, *Caulfield 1869-1935: Memories of the Past*, City of Caulfield, 1992, p1
¹⁴ 'Melbourne and Oakleigh Railway', *Argus*, 9 January 1879, p6
¹⁵ Following pushback from the Shire, the Minister of Lands agreed to reserve Paddy's Swamp in late 1879 permanently. ('Municipal Councils', *Age*, 27 September 1879, p6)



1879 subdivision plan of the western side of Kambrook Road – property in the group is approximately outlined in yellow.
(Source: *Suburban allotments Parish of Prahran, Country Bourke, 1879*, SLV, BIB 2115434)



1879 subdivision plan of the eastern side of Kambrook Road – property in the group is indicated approximately by the green stars. (Source: J. Noone, *Suburban allotments Parish of Prahran*, SLV, BIB ID 2115434)

The buildings that comprise the Balaclava Road Victorian Group reflect the heightened force and pace of the land boom in Caulfield. They are associated with the Wybars, a family of Scottish immigrants whose various members acquired multiple holdings in the vicinity of the Balaclava and Kambrook roads intersection, on which George, the patriarch, and his sons, constructed several homes and shops to either rent or sell. In doing so, they developed – evidently with a degree of forethought and strategy – a compact and self-contained locale at the intersection that continued as such until the mid-20th century, when it was subsumed into the broader suburb of Caulfield North.

In February 1875, the 40-year-old painter, George Wybar (1835-96) arrived on the *Oamaru* in Port Chalmers, New Zealand via Glasgow accompanied by his wife, Agnes (then aged 38), and five children.¹⁶ By 1876, Agnes had given birth to twins and the Wybars had settled in South Dunedin. During this time, George operated as a boarding-house keeper and restaurateur, during

¹⁶ (Civil) Register of Births, Marriages and Deaths, via *ScotlandsPeople*, <www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>, accessed 22 November 2019. The passenger list recorded George as from Lanark, a township in central Scotland, which presumed to be his birthplace, although prior to emigrating, he appears to have been working in 1860s Edinburgh as a painter/builders as well as 'wine and spirit merchant' – *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 24 July 1866 and *Montrose Standard*, 16 July 1869; and passenger list of the *Oamaru*, available at *New Zealand Bound*, <<https://sites.rootsweb.com/~nzbound/Oamaru1875.htm>>, accessed 21 November 2019

which he was accused of selling sly grog. Concurrently, he oversaw several speculative construction projects, including multiple cottages and a three-storey brick and concrete hotel (with a hydraulic lift) at Cargill's Corner (since demolished).¹⁷ After multiple tries, he was also eventually elected to the South Dunedin Council.¹⁸

Despite this apparent success, by late 1880, George had declared insolvent and two years later was contesting a charge of 'wilful and corrupt perjury' regarding an oath made during a past legal matter.¹⁹ Following these experiences, the Wybar family embarked on a well-trodden path for Scottish emigrants and immigrated to the booming metropolis of Melbourne around 1885. At that time, George – described as a 'low-set, middle-aged man' – was noted in the local press as having been fined for using 'abusive and disgusting language' in response to an order from the station porter to extinguish his pipe before boarding a first-class carriage in South Melbourne.²⁰



Portrait of George Wybar in full Highland regalia, including a badger *sporrán* (Scottish Gaelic for 'purse'). Based on the uniform, he may have served in the British army before migrating to Australasia or, like many lowland Scots in the period, had embraced Highland culture. (Source: SLV, Accession no. H90/138)

By the onset of the land boom in Caulfield, the portions of Paddy's Swamp and The Heath sold in 1879 had passed through several different hands and further subdivided. The Wybars appear to have been active in this part of Caulfield from at least June 1886, when 'Wybar & Son' (George Junior) began to advertise for painters and stonemasons ('for [the] foundations of two villas').²¹ They went onto acquire and develop the land associated with the Balaclava Road Victorian Group in two separate purchases over 1887, as described below.

344 Balaclava Road

In July 1887, Agnes Wybar purchased about half an acre of land (0.16 hectares) at the north-east of the intersection of Balaclava and Kambrook roads from the Premier Permanent Land, Building and Investment Association.²² Possibly utilising a loan from another institution (as was typical in the period), The Federal Building Society,²³ the Wybars proceeded to build a couple of

¹⁷ The Wybars, 'late of Edinburgh', residents of Hillside Road, South Dunedin – *Otago Daily Times*, 10 April 1876, p3; 'Births', *Evening Star*, 27 March 1876, p2; 'Sly-Grog Selling At South Dunedin', *Otago Witness*, 26 May 1877, p10; 'Mr Wybar's Building', *Otago Witness*, 24 March 1877, p4; and 'Advertising', *Evening Star*, 28 September 1877, p3

¹⁸ 'South Dunedin Borough Council', *Otago Daily Times*, 18 February 1879, p3

¹⁹ 'New insolvents', *Otago Witness*, 2 October 1880, p22; and 'City Police Court', *Evening Star*, 4 March 1882, p2

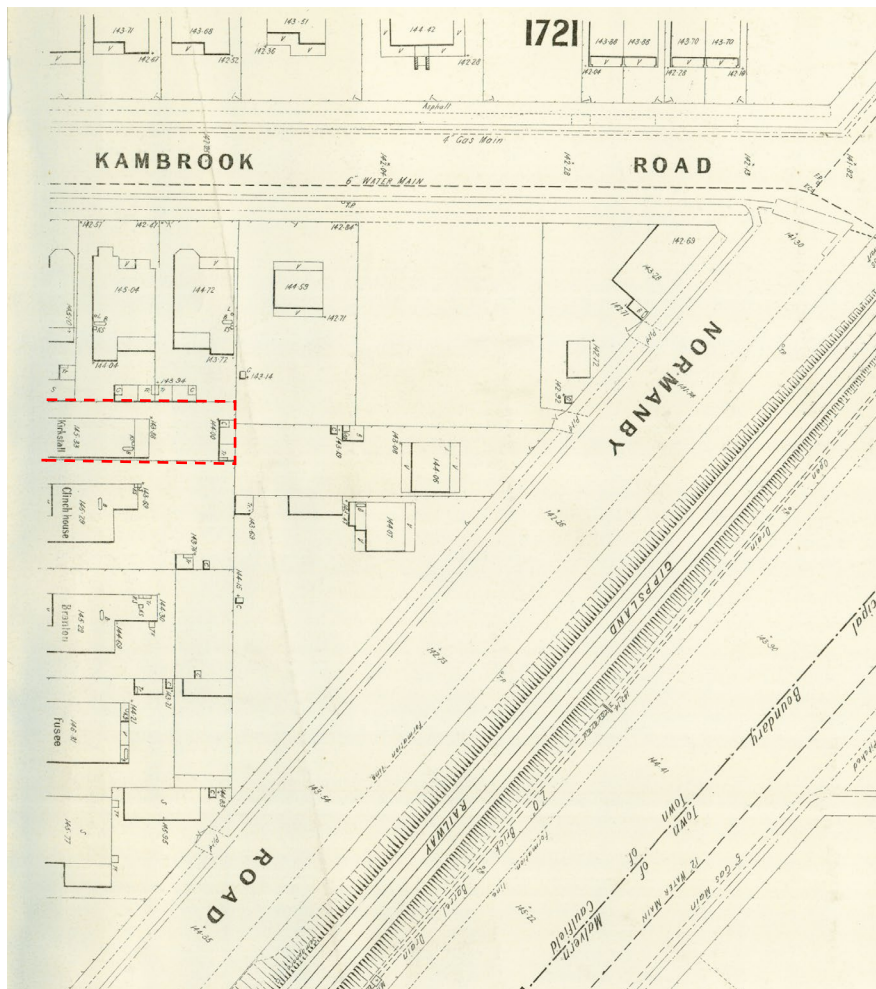
²⁰ 'Abusing a Railway Guard', *Herald*, 26 September 1885, p3

²¹ 'Situation Vacant', *Age*, 15 June 1886, p8; and 'Situation Vacant', *Age*, 30 August 1886, p8

²² Certificate of Title, vol. 1760, folio 940

²³ The Federal Building Society institution was briefly identified as the proprietor of the holding late that year before it was again transferred to Angas – Certificate of Title, vol. 1760, folio 940

freestanding villas to this bloc, including 344 Balaclava Road. This dwelling was first recorded as a brick house in February 1888 and rented to (and later owned by) John Lawrence, a produce merchant.²⁴ Across the Federation period, it was referred to as *Kirkstall*.



MMBW plan no. 1715, Malvern and Caulfield
Area north-east of the Kambrook/Balaclava roads intersection, as developed by 1908.
Group member, 334 Balaclava Road, outlined in red. North is right of frame. (Source: SLV)

330-338A Balaclava Road

In August 1887, George Wybar bought about half an acre (0.16 hectares) with a frontage to Balaclava Road, between Park Crescent and the right-of-way, from a large subdivision centred to the north-west of the Balaclava and Kambrook intersection.²⁵

By late 1889, Wybar had erected and tenanted the existing cluster of brick dwellings and shop/residences (nos 330 to 338A). That year, a tailor, Thomas Collins, was identified as the first occupant of no 330 (six rooms, shop and stabling), while John Tudehob and Mary A Williams (a 'teacher') inhabited the co-joined pair (nos 332 and 334), both of which had four rooms. There was also a bootmaker, James Smith, operating out of the projecting 'shop' wing of nos 338/338A, while a 'salesman', Frank Hanson(?), lived in or worked out of the rear four-room section.²⁶ This dual occupation, of the shop wing and rear section, appears to have continued into the 1940s. Ownership of these buildings passed from the Wybars to the Australian Deposit and

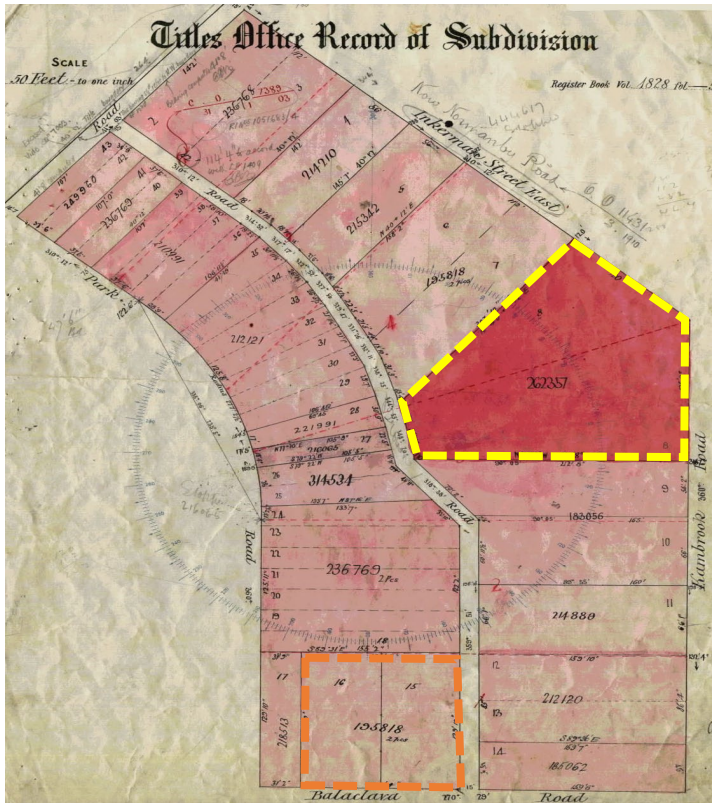
²⁴ City of Caulfield rate book, February 1888, entry 505 and March 1888, entry 864

²⁵ Certificate of Title, vol. 1828, folio 536 – This initial subdivision, organised by owner Emanuel King, a Carlton auctioneer, was 5.5 acres (2.25 hectares) in extent and included 13 existing weatherboard cottages/villas to the northern end of Park Crescent ('Advertising: Extensive Cottage Property', *Argus*, 17 April 1886, p3).

²⁶ City of Caulfield rate book, December 1889, entries 2215 to 2218

Mortgage Bank in January 1891, whether by sale or resumption is not known.²⁷ In the Federation period, nos 332 and 334, were known respectively as *Albert Villa* and *Stanley Villa*.

The commercial uses of nos 330 and 338/338A fluctuated, with the former accommodating a 'dairy' (i.e., a milk vendor, not producer), laundry, grocer and general store, and the latter various tradesmen, a 'prep school', an 'office' and 'printer'.²⁸ Retail use at no 330 appears to have stopped in the early 1950s.²⁹ A medical office now operates out of nos 338/338A.

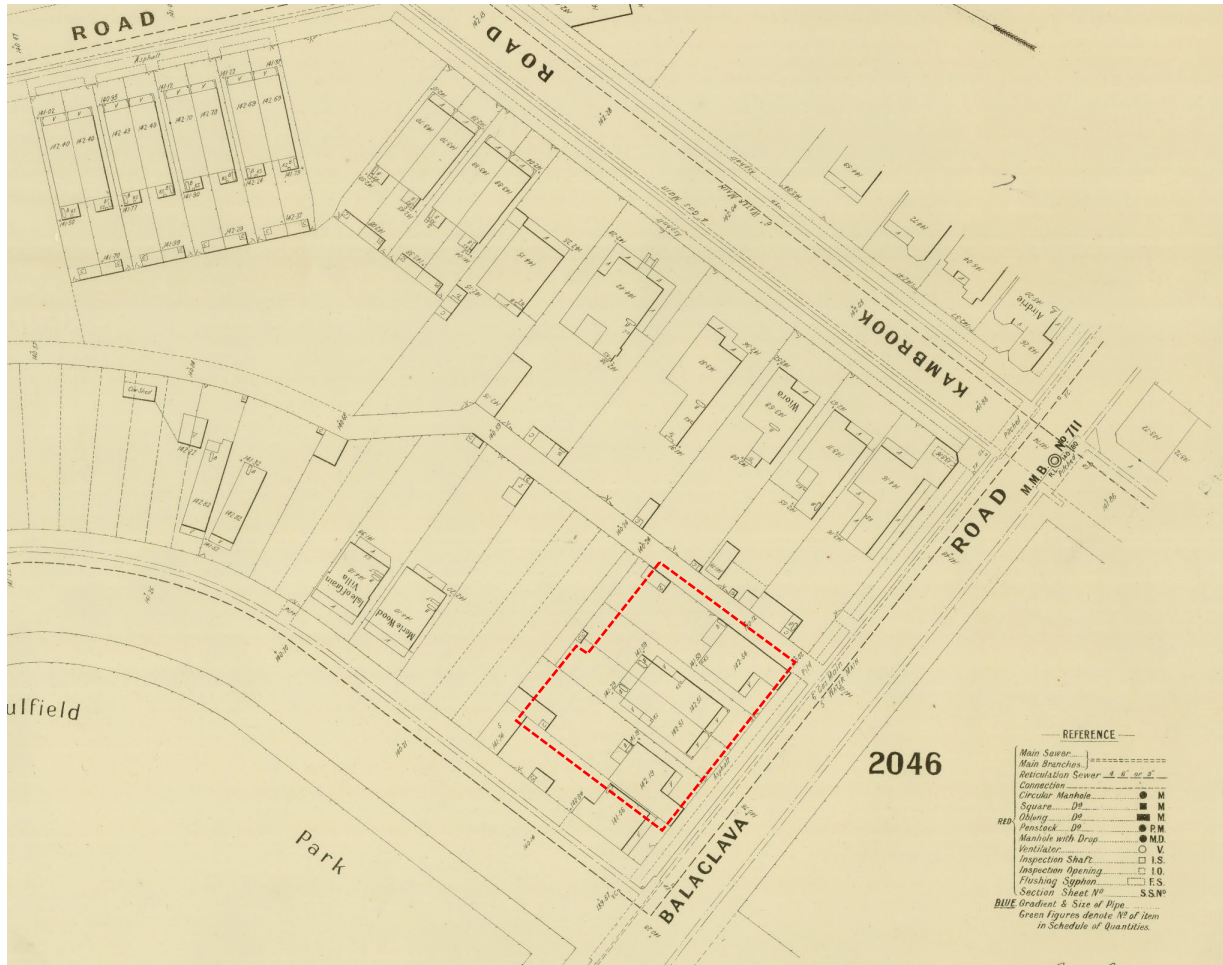


Map of Emanuel King's subdivision, sold between 1886 and 1891. George Wybar's 1887 purchase, part of the Balacava Road Victorian Group, is outlined in orange. His later 1889 acquisition, fronting Kambrook Road and Inkerman Street East (now Normanby Road), is outlined in yellow (part of HO152). (Source: Certificate of Title, vol. 1828, folio 536)

²⁷ Andrew Ward, '330-338 Balacava Road, Caulfield North', *Glen Eira Heritage Management Plan*, April 1998

²⁸ Review of *Sands & McDougal's Directory* editions, 1893-1935; and review of City of Caulfield rate book entries between 1890 and 1925

²⁹ Ward, '330-338 Balacava Road, Caulfield North'



MMBW plan no. 1721, Caulfield
Area north-west of the Kambrook/Balaclava roads intersection, as developed by 1908.
Group members, 330 to 338A Balaclava Road, outlined in red.
(Source: SLV)

347, 349 and 351 Balaclava Road

George acquired around half an acre (0.24 hectares) of land south-east of the Balaclava/Kambrook intersection in October 1887.³⁰ Initial entries in rate books for this section are difficult to interpret, but it appears that the substantial *Wybar's Building* (HO91) – out of which the Wybars ran a 'wineshop'³¹ and bakery (tenanted) – was erected that year at the corner (note inscription to Kambrook Road pediment, 'Caulfield Bakery 1887'). He also built a pair of shop/dwellings at 26 and 30 Kambrook Road (extant but outside the precinct) around the same time.

The run of detached row house-like dwellings at 347, 349 and 351 Balaclava Road was constructed between 1887 and 1888.³² George Wybar senior or junior (unclear which) appears to have been the initial occupant of *Ruby Villa* (no 351).³³ The Wybar family also appear to have lived in Kambrook Road, although the eight-roomed brick villa, known variously as *Devonvale* or *Seaforth*, built by George in Bond Street (since demolished) was their primary residence.³⁴

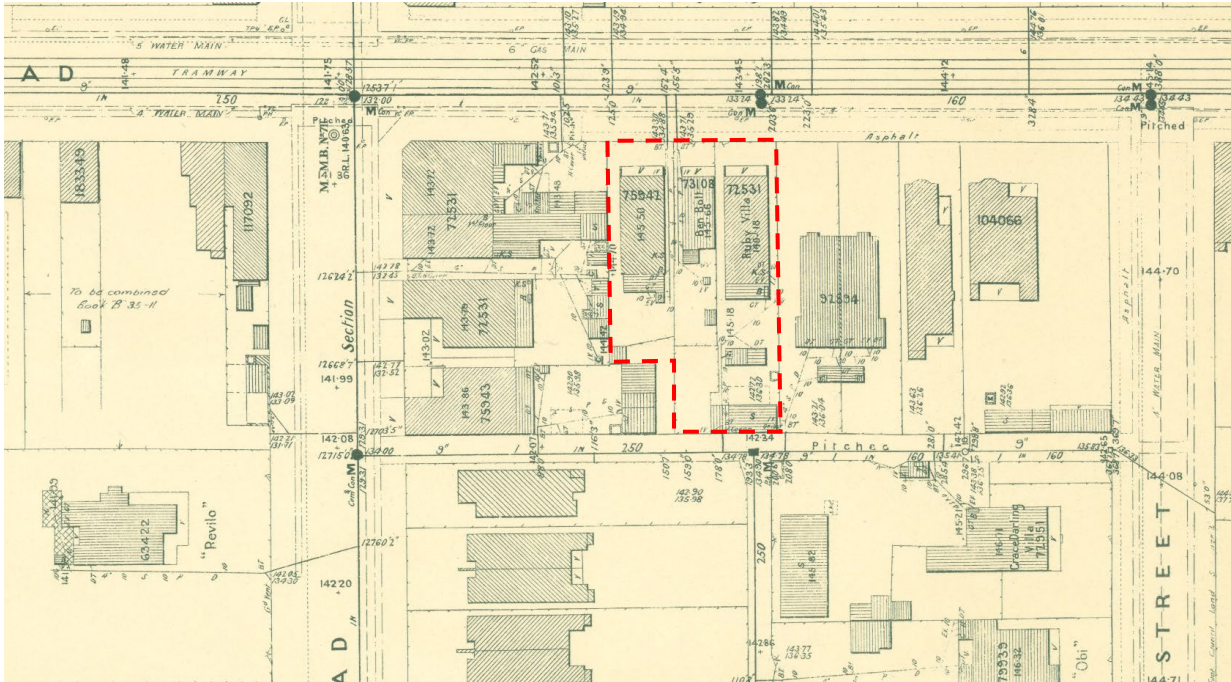
³⁰ Certificate of Title, vol. 1954, folio 786

³¹ A wine license had been granted to George Wybar in March 1888 ('Metropolitan Licensing Court', *Argus*, 2 March 1888, p11)

³² City of Caulfield rate book, February 1888, entries 514 to 519. In late 1887, 'Wybar and Son' were running advertisements to let unspecified shops at the corner of Kambrook Road.

³³ City of Caulfield rate book, February 1888, entries 514; and *Sands & McDougal's Directory*, 1890 edition, p147

³⁴ *Seaforth* is detailed in the 1908 MMBW (Caulfield, detail no. 2059) on the west side of Bond Street, at its intersection with Heywood Street, and shown with an elaborate footprint and return verandah. It was still describable as 'ornate' in the early 1920s ('A Third Caulfield Ramble', *Australasian*, 8 July 1922, p14).

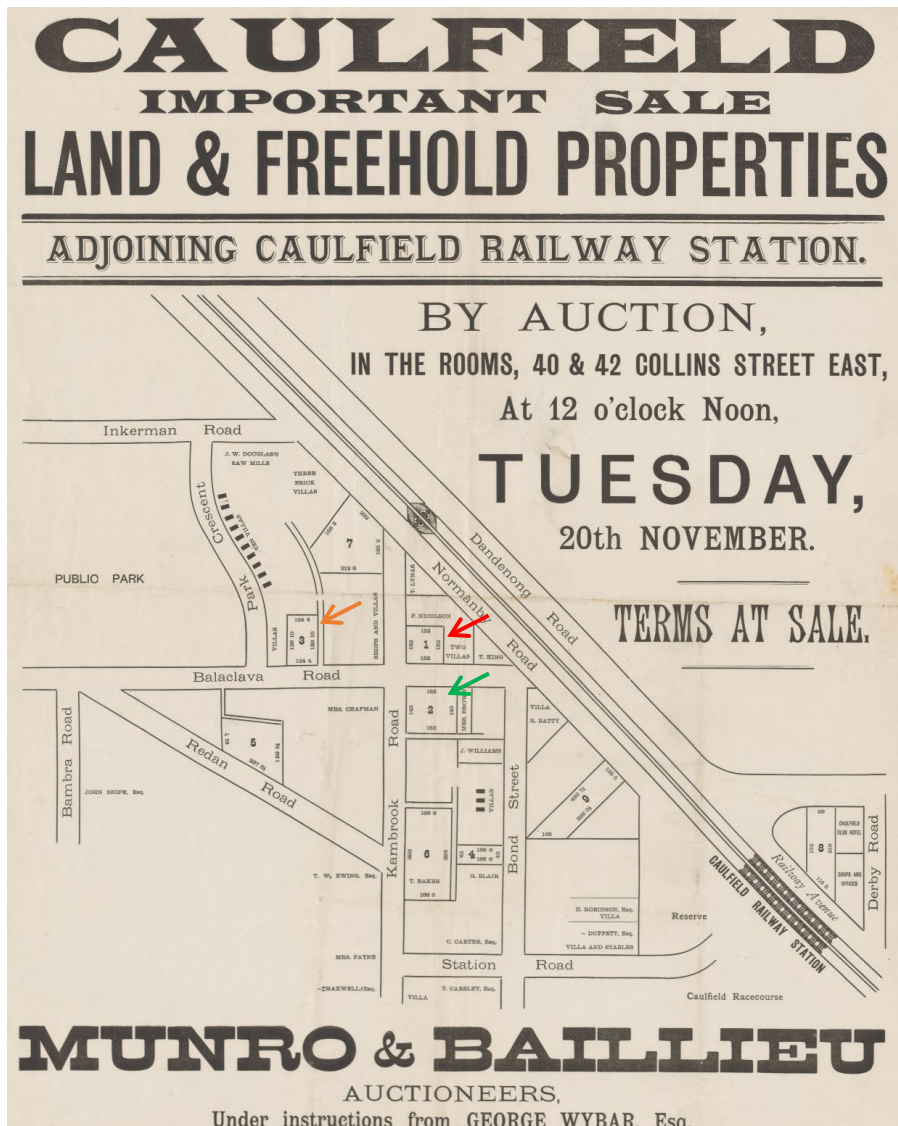


MMBW plan no. 2046, Caulfield
Area south of Balaclava Road, as developed by 1935.
Group members, 347 to 351 Balaclava Road, outlined in red.
(Source: SLV)



Early 20th century photograph of Wybar's Building (HO91) at the south-east corner of Balaclava and Kambrook roads.
The triangular pediment (and urns – since lost) and verandah of Wybar's shop/residence at 26 Kambrook Road are visible right of frame.
(Source: courtesy of Glen Eira Historical Society)

By late 1888 – at the crest of the land boom – George Wybar engaged Melbourne’s leading real estate firm (and future high-profile casualty of the impending collapse), Munro and Baillieu, to put his extensive Caulfield portfolio on the market. Consequently, a detailed auctioneering advertisement was produced to entice potential buyers. This promotional map is reproduced below, along with pertinent written descriptions (right side).



The 'Particulars' of group buildings:

Lot 1 (red arrow) 344 Balclava Road, one of 'THREE WELL-BUILT BRICK VILLAS, each containing 6 Rooms, Enclosed Verandah, Bathroom, Pantries, Washhouse, and Shed'.

Lot 2 (green arrow) 347 and 351 Balclava Road: 'BRICK VILLA, 5 Rooms, Bathroom, Enclosed Verandah'; 349 Balclava Road: '5-Roomed W. B. COTTAGE, Workshops, Stables'.

Lot 3 (orange arrow) 330-338A Balclava Road: 'On which are erected a BRICK SHOP and DWELLING, containing 5 Rooms, Enclosed Verandah, &c., 3-Stall Stables, Harness Room, Shed, &c., TWO BRICK VILLAS, each containing 4 Rooms, Bathroom, Shed, &c.; [and] a BRICK SHOP and DWELLING, 5 Rooms, Bathroom, and Pantry, Stable, &c., with 15-Foot Right-of-way at side.'

'IMPORTANT SALE', November 1888 – depiction of George's holdings near Caulfield Station, designated by numbered lots (1 to 9). Column right records description of the Wybar buildings in the group extracted from the sale notice. (Source: NLA, MAP RM 3628)

Another version of this promotion noted that the property portfolio of 'George Wybar, Esq.' (he appears to have periodically assumed this self-provided title upon his arrival in Melbourne) was situated 'in undoubtedly the best position in Caulfield', the various sites 'having been selected by the vendor with the greatest discrimination'.³⁵ Around the same time, it was reported that Wybar had informed Council of his intention to construct a 'large hotel and coffee palace, containing 45 rooms' in Inkerman Road (it is not clear whether this venture was ever embarked on).³⁶

Small-scale contractors/speculative builders were essential in the development of late 19th and early 20th-century Melbourne. At this time, most domestic and commercial buildings were undertaken by a handful of labourers and tradesmen in a relatively brief time, predominantly utilising locally sourced materials and hand tools. In this sense, George Wybar is not unusual; however, the

³⁵ 'Advertising: Special Note', *Herald*, 19 November 1888, p5

³⁶ 'Caulfield Shire Council', *Prahran Telegraph*, 24 November 1888, p9

extent to which his personal life and building activities are documented (and survive) within such a definable part of the locale is notable.

As Scottish immigrants, the Wybars also provide a valuable case study of what was, until the 1950s, Australia's third-largest intake of newcomers (after the English and Irish). The family appears to be emblematic of the principal stream of Scottish incomers, the majority of whom derived from the more urban/industrialised lowland region were Presbyterian and tended to be literate and more skilled.³⁷ Scottish Melbournians remained a prominent cultural layer in Victorian society until after the Second World War. Because of the relative difficulty of sourcing the granular detail required to flesh out 'ordinary' immigrant lives in these periods, scholarship has tended to focus on 'elite' examples, which equates to predominantly male business and political figures. The enterprising Wybar family provide a viable alternative and, possibly, a more representative avenue of research.³⁸

The Wybars continued their association with Caulfield North into the early 1890s when George was known to have been working on a row-house development in Kambrook and Normanby roads (HO152). In 1895, his concurrent interest, hotel management, appears to have taken priority with his purchase of the publican license for the Rosebery Arms in Surry Hills, Sydney.³⁹ George Wybar was recorded at residing in a Sydney terrace by early that year,⁴⁰ while Agnes remained in Melbourne, residing at 15 Dalgety Street, St Kilda.⁴¹ By this point, their adult children had dispersed across Australia, although a couple still resided in the Caulfield district.

George Wybar's 'sudden' death occurred in January 1896, while visiting Edinburgh, Scotland (his first return trip since immigrating).⁴² In the wake of his death, the *Sydney Morning Herald* described him as 'late of Caulfield',⁴³ and George's 'loving' family penned an 'In Memoriam' poem in the *Argus* ('Gone from me, George, how sadly I miss you').⁴⁴ Agnes died in 1917 aged 80 ('One of the best, gone to rest').⁴⁵

A section of George Wybar's request for tenders (column left) and advertisements (column right) follow.

PLASTERING villa and shop; labor or labor and material; close Monday night. G. Wybar and Son, Kambrook road, Caulfield.

Herald, 12 February 1887, p1

TENDERS, Plumbing, &c., Shop and Villa. G. Wybar, Kambrook and Balaclava roads, Caulfield.

Age, 24 February 1887, p3

IF Martin & Topp does not complete Contract of Carpenter Work by Monday, the 28th inst., same to be let at their risk. G. Wybar, Caulfield.

Age, 22 March 1887, p3

TENDERS.—Wanted, Plastering brick Villa; also Tuckpotting. G. Wybar, Kambrook-road, Caulfield.

Age, 25 April 1887, p7

TO STOREKEEPERS and Others.
Rare Chance. No Opposition.
Corner of Kambrook and Balaclava roads, Caulfield, near Station.

General STORE, good opening for a pushing man; corner shop. Also,

First-class opening for General Draper, Bootmaker, Milliner and Dressmaker. No opposition, two-story, with dwelling; moderate rents to start, every convenience. Also, private brick Villas, four to seven rooms, gas, water, &c.

G. WYBAR and SON, Proprietors, Caulfield.

Argus, 16 February 1888, p10

RARE Chance.—Corner Shop and Dwelling, suit saddler, bootmaker, draper, chemist, or other trades; also Shop and Dwelling, suit greengrocer; seven-roomed Villas, every convenience; four-roomed Villas, bath, out sheds, gas and water, rising locality, no opposition, good openings, rents moderate, 5 minutes from station. G. Wybar & Son, Kambrook-road, Caulfield.

Age, 21 April 1888, p16

³⁷ Elizabeth Nelson, 'Scots', *eMelbourne*, School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, July 2008, Available online. The Wybars' Presbyterian adherence is touched on in 'Law Report. Supreme Court', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 March 1896, p3

³⁸ 'Law Report. Supreme Court', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 March 1896, p3

³⁹ 'Water Licensing Court', *Evening News*, 27 February 1895, p5

⁴⁰ 52 Fitzroy Street, Surry Hills – 'Water Licensing Court', *Evening News*, 27 February 1895, p5

⁴¹ 'Advertising', *Age*, 28 May 1896, p3

⁴² Death certificate, (Civil) Register of Births, Marriages and Deaths, via *ScotlandsPeople*, <www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>, accessed 22 November 2019

⁴³ 'Family Notices', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 February 1896, p1

⁴⁴ 'Family Notices', *Argus*, 16 January 1897, p1

⁴⁵ 'Family Notices', *Argus*, 9 January 1917, p1

The aerial photographs below show little change to the group or their surrounds over the first half of the 20th century.



1931 aerial photograph of the Balaclava and Kambrook roads intersection.
(Source: Landata, *Maldon Prison*, Run 25, Frame 2477)



1945 aerial photograph of the Balaclava and Kambrook roads intersection.
(Source: Landata, *Melb. and Metropolitan Area Project*, No. 5, Run 16, Frame 57836)



1974 aerial photograph of the Balaclava and Kambrook roads intersection.
(Source: Landata, *Melbourne 1974*, Run 41E, Frame 186)

Thematic Context/Comparative Analysis

City of Glen Eira Thematic Environmental History [Refresh] 2020 (Built Heritage):

- 6.3 Shaping the Suburbs

Known comparable places in the City of Glen Eira:

There is a range of mid-to-late Victorian-period residences and shops affected by heritage overlays in the municipality, particularly within Elsternwick and Caulfield, reflecting their pronounced growth during the late 19th century. On balance, many of these places, while generally Italianate in style, are more substantial than the types in the *Balaclava Road Victorian Group*. The latter is more illustrative of an economic/speculative mode of suburban development – historically crucial in the formation of these locales – albeit one displaying the exuberant detail associated with the era.

Although some of the Wybars' buildings in the locale have been lost, some are subject to heritage overlays:

- *Wybar's Buildings*, 22, 24, 24A and 24B Kambrook Road, Caulfield North (HO91) – a complex of one and two-storey rendered shops with a splayed corner to the intersection of Balaclava and Kambrook roads. Erected in 1887 by the Wybars as a bakery and commercial premises (including a grocer, confectionery, and fruiterer). Possibly accommodated a masonic lodge or the like (note square and compass symbol to pediments). Verandah has been removed and shopfronts modified. Now private residences.
- 1-15 Kambrook Road and 58-89 Normanby Road, Caulfield North (HO152) – a medium-sized precinct that includes two freestanding polychromatic villas (13 and 15 Kambrook Road) and a six bichrome brick semi-attached pairs (5-11 Kambrook Road and 53-67 and 71-79 Normanby Road), erected by the Wybars, likely between 1890 and 1891. These dwellings resemble the row house-like examples in the *Balaclava Road Victorian Group*, with Scottish-tinged names and parapets decorated with tiled or vermiculated panels, urns, volutes, unicorn or lion statutes, shell motifs, and cast-iron components to the verandahs. This precinct also includes examples of symmetrical Italianate villas, although not built by the Wybars and some interwar bungalows.

- 20 Kambrook Road, Caulfield North (HO153) – rendered villa with return cast-iron verandah, faceted bay and distinctive keystones depicting horseshoes and lion heads. Built by the Wybars in 1888. A ‘shop’ was constructed to the corner in 1889, possibly by George (since removed).
- 16 Kambrook Road, Caulfield North (HO121) – rendered (unpainted) villa with balustraded parapet. Presumed to have been built by the Wybars (they owned the land) in 1888, although it lacks the elaboration characteristic of their other work.



24-26 Kambrook Road, Caulfield North (HO91).



11-9 Kambrook Road (HO152).

Other comparable late Victorian overlays (with no known Wybar involvement) in the municipality include:

- 2-24 Edward Street, Elsternwick (HO21) – a row of twelve attached bichrome brick row houses, built circa 1890. These single-fronted dwellings exhibit an array of typical Italianate detail, including alternating curved and triangular pediments, classicised balustrades and cast-iron ornamentation.
- *Caulfield North Estate and Environs* (HO14) – a large residential precinct with a heterogeneous group of contributory buildings (cottages, row/terrace houses, villas, flats) dating from the late 19th century as well as the Federation and Interwar periods. There are some Italianate-style villas in the precinct, although they tend to be on smaller allotments and do not form such consistent streetscapes as the Balaclava Road Victorian Group.

The combined shop/residences at 330 and 338/338A Balaclava Road, particularly their U-shape format, are uncommon for the district.

Previous Assessment

Andrew Ward, *City of Caulfield Urban Conservation Study*, field survey sheet 3 and 11 (1990):

- 344, 347 and 351 Balaclava Road – of local significance (C grade), and
- 348 Balaclava Road – of local interest (D grade).

The citation for ‘330-338 Balaclava Road, Caulfield North’ (HO90) in the *City of Glen Eira Heritage Management Plan* (1996) included 330, 332, 334 and 338/338A. This report has expanded and renamed the precinct to include 344, 347, 349 and 351 Balaclava Road.

Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls

External Paint Controls	No
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	No
Solar Energy System Controls	Yes
Outbuildings and/or Fences	No

Extent of Heritage Overlay

The proposed extent of the heritage overlay would be as outlined on the following map:



Recommended extent of the heritage overlay.
(Source: Nearmap, August 2019)